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AUTHOR LaPidus, Jules B.
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ABSTRACT

Perspectives on graduate education and the preparation of college faculty are considered, as well as the roles of the undergraduate and postgraduate years, by the president of the Council of Graduate Schools. Undergraduates usually pursue graduate studies because of research and scholarly interests, and graduate education is almost always discipline-based. Ph.D. education, at least in the arts and sciences, is focused on turning out scholars rather than training college teachers. After graduate school, training in research is generally viewed as appropriate preparation for a faculty career. Valuable experiences that could be emphasized during undergraduate education are general learning and bringing students interested in different disciplines the chance to share that excitement with other students through experiences like seminars. Using bright juniors/seniors to tutor beginning students can be a start in the recruitment process for teaching. Graduate schools can help develop effective programs for training graduate teaching assistants as college teachers. New Ph.D.s should be provided the chance to spend several years developing their teaching skills with the guidance of established faculty members. (SW)

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PREPARING FACULTY

GRADUATE EDUCATION'S ROLE

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by Jules B. LaPidus

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Since the vast majority of faculty members have doctoral degrees, and since the places in our society that grant doctoral degrees are universities with graduate schools, almost everyone who is a faculty member has successfully completed graduate school. Obviously, the converse is not true—that is, all those who successfully complete graduate school are not faculty members.

Bowen & Schuster[1], in summarizing the studies on career aspirations of college students, comment on the small number of students who show interest in becoming college teachers and the distressing fact that, small as they have been, these numbers are getting even smaller. On the other hand, the number of students going to graduate school or planning to go to graduate school to pursue doctoral degrees has remained fairly constant over the past 10-20 years (although there have been significant changes in the makeup of that student group). Thus, the decision to go to graduate school does not imply a decision to become a faculty member. Graduate school is not a normal school for faculty. It may be a part of the process, but there is more to graduate school than just preparing people to be faculty members, and there certainly is more to the preparation of faculty than just going to graduate school.

I intend to use a slightly wider angle lens and to focus on the relationship of graduate school to what comes before and what comes after, with particular reference to the preparation of faculty.

The Undergraduate Period

Recruiting for graduate school is, for the most part, discipline based, although it may also be problem or issue based. The point is that most undergraduates decide to go on because of field-related, rather than specific job-related, interests. The names we have for what they choose are names like chemist, economist, psychologist, electrical engineer, etc. and not names like college professor, project manager, personnel director, or consultant. They relate more to intellectual involvement and skills than to the places people work or the specific things they do. Further, none of the names we use connote the college classroom. In fact, it is only where we have no names to describe our intellectual involvement—for example, in languages and literature—that the connotation of faculty is compelling. Our recruiting is done by appealing to the research or scholarly aspects. We do not recruit future faculty members by talking about college teaching; we do it by talking about physics or literature or anthropology or genetics. Faculty members who have been raised in the culture of their discipline proselytize actively among good students. When possible, opportunities are provided for bright undergraduates to participate in research. The entire emphasis is on capturing a budding interest in a field and directing it toward a career in that field.

Graduate School

Graduate education, at least at the doctoral level, is devoted almost totally to providing individuals with advanced education and training so that they can work in their chosen fields. It is almost always discipline based, although occasionally it gets more specific than that, and there is a strong element of socialization in the discipline. In addition, there is another level of socialization; to the life of the university. In most cases, the relationship to the discipline—to

Jules B. LaPidus is president of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States.

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> We persist in the idea that training in research is the appropriate preparation for a career as a faculty member . . . [and] reject the idea that training in teaching . . . is useful or desirable.

the "invisible college"—is inherent; that to the university is incidental. Chemistry students learn to look like, act like, think like, and talk like chemists; they work with other chemistry students, their teachers are chemists, they meet other chemists at regional and national meetings, in short, they become chemists. They also, however, observe, and are influenced by, the academic climate in which they are immersed for five or ten years. Many of them will be teaching assistants, and all will work with faculty in a more colleague-like relationship than they had in the past. Some will become actively involved in university governance and serve on academic committees and councils. They may become interested in what chemists do on university faculties.

A certain number of these people will decide to explore the possibility of a faculty career. This proportion will vary greatly by discipline as will the timing of the decision. The fewer the options, the earlier the choice. Another way of putting that is the more numerous the options, the more likely that the choice of any single option will be a conscious decision rather than a foregone conclusion. Those with an interest in 18th century English literature know early on that they want to be college professors. Those with an interest in organic chemistry might not make that kind of decision until after graduate school.

In any case, the institutions responsible for the graduate education of most faculty members have viewed the graduate experience to be directed toward the production of good research and good researchers. Efforts to train people to become college teachers are few and are directed primarily toward teaching assistants. These activities usually are discipline based, and are extremely variable in adequacy, intensity, and quality across departments and institutions. The TA experience, in the right context, with the right mentor(s) can be a superb introduction to college teaching; in the wrong hands, it can have the opposite effect. But even the TA experience is often not viewed as a specific mechanism for training prospective college teachers. It can be seen solely as a way of supporting graduate students that gives them good experience. That can be an end in itself.

In addition, there is a great difference between those fields where TA support is the only support available and where those students fortunate enough to get appointments try to hang on to them for years, usually teaching the same introductory courses over and over again, and those fields where it is more usual for students to be TAs for a year or two and then move into a research assistantship or fellowship. In the latter case, one could assume that a message was being sent—that is, you teach until your grant is funded and then you don't have to do it any more. I wonder if the former situation, which can lead to teacher burnout before a graduate student finishes degree requirements, might not be worse. At any rate, I believe that broad-brush indictments of the TA experience are unfair and unproductive. They do a disservice to hundreds of departments in dozens of disciplines that spend time, effort, thought, and money on TA training and education.

All that being said, it remains true that Ph.D. education in this country, at least in the arts and sciences, is based on the concept of turning out scholars capable of doing independent work and not on the idea of training college teachers.

The Post-Graduate Period

The National Research Council's Survey of Earned Doctorates[2] collects data on the postgraduation plans of new doctorate recipients. Results of the surveys from 1969 and 1983 indicate the following with regard to the immediate postgraduate plans of the doctoral cohorts from those two years:

1. In 1969, almost 70% of those with definite plans were going into academic employment. In 1983 that had dropped to 48%.

2. Differences by field were large:

Field	% in 1969	% in 1983
Humanities	93	80
Social Sciences	69	45
Engineering	29	29
Biological Sciences	41	18
Chemistry	18.5	8

3. The major reasons for this decline are complex and vary by field. Across all fields, the major changes were not, as one might expect, in greatly increased numbers going into business/industry, although there were some increases in the postdoctoral category. Even in the humanities, where the number of people seeking postdoctoral positions is minuscule, the percent of those with immediate postdoctoral plans doubled (from 1.9% to 3.7%). In chemistry it rose from 33% to 43%; in engineering from 5.3% to 13%; in social sciences from 8% to 14%; and in biosciences from 43% to 66.6%. The only other rise as dramatic was an increase in humanities graduates going into business/industry of 0.4% to 6%.

An increasing number of Ph.D.s are taking postdoctoral appointments. There are many reasons for this that I will not go into here except to make these observations:

▶ Postdoctoral experience in research is sought after, often funded by the federal government or other extra-university funding entities, and adds a valued credential to the curriculum vitae of those seeking either academic or other employment. In many fields, it has become a prerequisite for an academic job. It provides an opportunity to hone one's research skills, not as a student, but as a colleague.

▶ The equivalent postdoctoral experience in teaching—producing what Bowen & Schuster[4] refer to as "the Nomads" (full time nontenure track faculty on short term appointments)—is characterized by "despair and dogged determination rather than optimism," rarely if ever funded by outside sources, and may be viewed negatively by prospective academic employers.

Thus, in the period immediately after completion of graduate school, a period very appropriate for applying one's formal education and training to some specific career objectives, we persist in the idea that training in research is the appropriate preparation for a career as a faculty member. Apparently, we reject the idea that training in teaching, at the level of the postdoctoral, is useful or desirable.

Preparing the Professoriate

In all fairness, we must consider the diversity of the system we are examining, particularly with regard to type of institution and discipline, and recognize that for some disciplines, particularly the sciences, and for some institutions, particularly the so-called major research universities, the system works very well. The bright, well-prepared, and motivated student will find an atmosphere of intellectual excitement and stimulation in the research university that is unmatched in any other place in our society. Jeremy Bernstein's articles in the *New Yorker*[4] on how he became a physicist make excellent reading on this topic. Among other things, Bernstein illustrates the role of the scholar/teacher in this type of setting.

But preparing faculty members for that small number of selective, research oriented universities is not really the major problem. The problem, as stated recently by Boyer in *College*[5] is that "... the American professoriate is a profession with many cultures," and the diversity of the institutions from which they come and in which they will teach and pursue their scholarly interests, is enormous. This makes it highly unlikely that a single way of training faculty (in the generic sense) will ever be productive.

> I have found total agreement on one point: Faculty should be scholarly.

In 1949, Howard Mumford Jones, in an address titled "The Graduate School and the Problem of Training Teachers"[6] suggested that we split graduate education and have Research Training Institutes for producing research workers, and the Graduate College, "... the primary purpose of which shall be the education of persons competent to teach intelligently the general work of the liberal college." Jones went on to describe the attributes deemed desirable in a university professor. The idea of personal scholarship is implicit. Added to it are broad ranging interests that extend beyond one's field to the entire range of human knowledge. All of this is coupled with training in the theory of learning and the art of teaching.

There is little question that this particular combination is highly desirable. The problem is producing it. Most of the specific programs suggested over the years have not been successful. The Doctor of Arts degree still has some advocates, but it has never become the widely accepted college teaching credential hoped for by its originators. The Ph.D. program, through the recruitment of academically able students with scholarly interests and with its concentration on comprehensive knowledge of a field and original research, continues to be our way to prepare faculty members and, perhaps surprisingly, it often works very well, producing that unique combination of teaching and research that characterizes the best in American higher education.

In all of the discussions of the role of research and scholarship in the preparation of the professoriate, I have found total agreement on one point: Faculty should be scholarly. In Boyer's words, "While not all professors are or should be publishing researchers, they, nonetheless, should be first-class scholars. We understand this to mean staying abreast of the profession, knowing the literature in one's field, and skillfully communicating such information to students. To weaken faculty commitment to scholarship, as we define it here, is to undermine the undergraduate experience, regardless of the academic setting." He goes on to say:

Scholarship is not an esoteric appendage; it is at the heart of what the profession is all about. All faculty, throughout their careers, should, themselves, remain students. As scholars, they must continue to learn and be seriously and continuously engaged in the expanding intellectual world. This is essential to the vitality and vigor of the undergraduate college.

The best way we have found to produce scholarly people is through immersion in scholarship and the scholarly process. But we have spent little time or effort in thinking about the uses to which scholarship is put. We have assumed that research is the logical and desired outcome of scholarly training and rarely have we considered the idea that scholarship is the process we use to bring together the results of research so that we understand the current state of knowledge and can speculate intelligently about the future. Viewed in that light, teaching, as the act of refining and transmitting the knowledge acquired through research and scholarship, becomes a direct and desirable outcome of scholarly training.

The desire to do basic research is not the only reason to become a faculty member; indeed, I believe it is realistic to suggest that teaching, at the college or university level, is a reasonable aspiration for people interested in pursuing a scholarly career, and that the scholarly preparation for that kind of career is done quite well in our graduate schools. But as I pointed out earlier, there is more to the preparation of faculty than just going to graduate school. The pre-graduate period of induction into the discipline of scholarship has

to be seen in broader terms than just as an introduction to research. The matter of recruiting young potential scholars (and/or faculty members) is based on the relationship between student and teacher, and while this is seen as putting the student on the right track, that track can be so narrow, particularly through the construction of a kind of pre-graduate major, that the talented undergraduate can lose the valuable experience of general learning that could characterize undergraduate education. Instead, the student may seek to become a clone of the teacher, and if the teacher's interests are narrow, the student will emulate that model.

Coordination across disciplines is needed to bring these interested students into contact with each other. Honors programs can facilitate this, but what is really needed is for undergraduate students who are working their way into fascination with a discipline to have the opportunity, through seminars and related experiences, to share that excitement with other students, and thus, in effect, begin to teach. Some part of the recruitment should involve recruitment for teaching and this should be explicit. The involvement of bright juniors and seniors as tutors for beginning students or even in the high schools should be encouraged.

The teaching assistant experience in graduate school forms another part of the process and must be taken seriously as part of the development of faculty members. There are many examples of excellent programs that have been developed for this purpose, and efforts are underway to create a national clearinghouse for information on these programs. The relationship of the graduate school to the colleges in the matter of TA training is often a delicate one. TAs are part of the undergraduate teaching force, and department chair chairs as well as college deans may feel that graduate deans have no business interfering in what is basically an undergraduate instructional issue. But if the issue is defined in terms of the preparation of future faculty members, it becomes the business of all those to whom the continuing quality and vitality of the faculty is important.

Teaching, as the act of refining and transmitting the knowledge acquired through research and scholarship, becomes a direct and desirable outcome of scholarly training.

We have developed a system that relies heavily, at least in those universities that are responsible for training Ph.D.s, on graduate students as teachers of undergraduates. We have no hesitation about citing the important roles of mentors in the preparation of scholars; the argument is just as valid in the preparation of teachers. Graduate schools, working with departments and serving a coordinating role within institutions and among institutions, can lead the way in the development of effective programs for training TAs as college teachers.

Finally, the postdoctoral teaching experience, viewed as a logical continuation of the pre-graduate and graduate experiences, and recognizing the increasing scholarly maturity of the prospective faculty member, can serve as a capstone in the process of preparing college professors. As pointed out previously, the teaching equivalent of the research postdoctoral appointment, that is, a short term—two to three years—full time, intensive, nontenure track involvement in one's field, has not been a particularly fruitful idea. Although there have been specific programs to do this over the years at a number of universities, no generally accepted model has evolved. Yet here again, the mentor idea should be compelling, and new Ph.D.s should be interested in the opportunity to spend several years developing their teaching skills under the guidance of established faculty members in colleges and universities that have made specific commitments to undergraduate education. This kind of experience should be a definite asset to those seeking academic positions, and the current revival of interest in the preparation of faculty should be a good time to design and implement programs of this kind.

Throughout this article, I have referred repeatedly to the graduate school. That is a term that means different things to different people. In its most general sense, the graduate school is the faculty and students studying together in specific programs at the postbaccalaureate level. In its most specific sense, it is a central university office responsible for nurturing and fostering graduate education in all programs across at least the arts and sciences, and often across the entire institution. I also have described a process designed to bring young scholars into the faculty ranks. However defined, the graduate school sits in the middle of this process. It is vitally concerned with the quality of the undergraduates it recruits, and depends for that quality on the effectiveness of the undergraduate faculty, all of whom are either still in graduate school or products of it.

The scholarly nexus through which interested students become faculty members is the graduate schools. To view them only as teacher training institutions, however, would be a mistake. To view them as being responsible for bringing together the discrete parts of the process for preparing scholarly faculty would be a challenge that they are uniquely capable of accepting. ■

Notes

[1]Howard R. Bowen and Jack H. Schuster, *American Professors: A National Resource Imperiled* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 202-209.
[2]"The Survey of Earned Doctorates" (Washington, D.C.: National Research Council, Office of Scientific and Engineering Personnel).
[3]Bowen, loc. cit., p. 151.
[4]Jeremy Bernstein, "Personal History" (*New Yorker Magazine*, January 26, 1987; February 2, 1987).
[5]Ernest L. Boyer, *College* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 128.
[6]Howard M. Jones, "Proceedings of the Association of Graduate Schools" (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1949), pp. 52-63.
[7]Boyer, loc. cit., p. 131.